DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 324 557 CG 022 811

AUTHOR Lamborn, Susie D.; And Others
TITLE Patterns of Competence and Adjustment among Adolescents from Authoritative, Authoritarian, Indulgent, and Neglectful Families.
INSTITUTION National Center on Effective Secondary Schools, Madison, WI.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.; Spencer Foundation, Chicago, Ill.
PUB DATE 20 Jun 90
CONTRACT G008690007
NOTE 43p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; Adolescent Development; *Adolescents; Behavior Problems; *Discipline; High Schools; *High School Students; *Parent Attitudes; *Parent Child Relationship; Stress Variables; *Student Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS *Parenting Style

ABSTRACT

To test Maccoby and Martin's (1983) revision of Baumrind's conceptual framework, the families of approximately 4,100 14- to 18-year-olds were classified into one of 4 groups (authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, or neglectful) on the basis of the adolescents' ratings of their parents on 2 dimensions: acceptance/involvement and firm control. The youngsters were then contrasted along four sets of outcomes: psychosocial development, school achievement, internalized distress, and problem behavior. Results indicated that adolescents raised in authoritative homes scored highest on measures of psychosocial competence and lowest on measures of psychological and behavioral dysfunction; the reverse was true for adolescents raised in neglectful homes. Adolescents raised in authoritarian homes scored reasonably well on measures indexing obedience and conformity to the standards of adults but had relatively poorer self-conceptions than other youngsters. In contrast, adolescents from indulgent homes evidenced a strong sense of self-confidence, but reported a higher frequency of substance abuse and school misconduct and were less engaged in school. The findings suggest that Maccoby and Martin's four-fold classification scheme provides a workable empirical framework for those interested in the study of adolscent socialization. More important, the results illustrate the need to distinguish between two types of "permissive" families: those that are indulgent and those that are neglectful. (Author)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED324557

CG022811

FINAL DELIVERABLE.

June 20, 1990

Patterns of Competence and Adjustment Among Adolescents From Authoritative, Authoritarian, Indulgent, and Neglectful Families

Susie D. Lamborn and Nina S. Mounts
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Laurence Steinberg
Temple University

Sanford M. Dornbusch
Stanford University

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
F.M. Newman

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The research was supported by a grant to Laurence Steinberg and B. Bradford Brown from the U.S. Department of Education, through the National Center on Effective Secondary Schools at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and from the Spencer Foundation, to our collaborators Sanford M. Dornbusch and P. Herbert Leiderman of the Stanford University Center for Families, Children, and Youth. Address correspondence to the first author, at the National Center for Effective Secondary Schools, 1025 West Johnson Street, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 53706.

Revision to Child Development

Abstract

In order to test Maccoby and Martin's (1983) revision of Baumrind's (1967) conceptual framework, the families of approximately 4,100 14- to 18-year-olds were classified into one of four groups (authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, or neglectful) on the basis of the adolescents' ratings of their parents on two dimensions: acceptance/involvement and firm control. The youngsters were then contrasted along four sets of outcomes: psychosocial development, school achievement, internalized distress, and problem behavior. Results indicate that adolescents raised in authoritative homes score highest on measures of psychosocial competence and lowest on measures of psychological and behavioral dysfunction; the reverse is true for adolescents raised in neglectful homes. Adolescents raised in authoritarian homes score reasonably well on measures indexing obedience and conformity to the standards of adults but have relatively poorer self-conceptions than other youngsters. In contrast, adolescents from indulgent homes evidence a strong sense of self-confidence, but report a higher frequency of substance abuse and school misconduct and are less engaged in school. The findings suggest that Maccoby and Martin's four-fold classification scheme provides a workable empirical framework for those interested in the study of adolescent socialization. More important, the results indicate the need to distinguish between two types of "permissive" families: those that are indulgent and those that are neglectful.

The literature on various socialization practices and their effects provides consistent evidence that parental warmth, inductive discipline, nonpunitive punishment practices, and consistency in child-rearing are each associated with positive developmental outcomes in children (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Since the early 1970s, this constellation of practices has come to be known as "authoritative" parenting, one of several prototypic styles of parenting identified in the seminal studies of Diana Baumrind (1967, 1971). Youngsters who are raised in authoritative homes score higher than their peers from permissive or authoritarian homes on a wide variety of measures of competence, achievement, social development, self-esteem, and mental health (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Although Baumrind's framework has been used primarily to examine socialization consequences during early and middle childhood, several recent studies have applied the scheme to explain variations in patterns of adolescent development, including academic achievement and psychosocial development (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg et al., 1989). The findings from these studies of adolescents corroborate findings from earlier age periods: young people benefit most from authoritative parenting, and least from authoritarian and permissive parenting.

Almost all influential theories of socialization in the family since the work of Sears, Maccoby, and Levin (1957), including Baumrind's, emphasize the need to consider the joint and interactive effects of different dimensions of parental

behavior -- most often combining an index of parental warmth, acceptance, or involvement with an index of parental control or strictness (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Yet, despite the widespread acceptance of such interactive models, most empirical studies conducted to date on parenting practices and adolescent outcomes continue, surprisingly, to focus on single dimensions of the parent-child relationship. In this study, we examine the interactive effects of parental warmth and firm control on several aspects of adolescent development. Two specific emphases distinguish this study from previous work in this vein.

First, we have employed a four-fold typology of parenting style consistent with the framework outlined in Maccoby and Martin's (1983) review. These authors point out that examining the combined effects of warmth and demandingness yields four types of families, rather than the three emphasized in most discussions and empirical tests of Baumrind's model (e.g., Dornbusch et al., 1987). Although most of these empirical studies distinguish between demanding families that are high versus low in warmth (i.e., authoritative versus authoritarian families), many ignore variations in warmth among families characterized by low levels of control, grouping these families together into a single category labeled "permissive".

Unfortunately, the use of a single category for all parents low in demandingness mixes together two types of families who have very different reasons for their lax control. On the one hand are families whose low level of demandingness derives from

an ideological orientation that has its foundations in trust, democracy, and indulgence (i.e., "indulgent permissiveness"). On the other are families whose low level of demandingness reflects disengagement from the responsibilities of child-rearing (i.e., "neglectful permissiveness"). Failing to distinguish between indulgent and neglectful permissiveness muddies findings on the consequences of permissive parenting for the child's development. In this study, we look explicitly at the contrasting consequences of indulgence versus neglect.

The second emphasis concerns the diversity of outcome variables examined. Aside from Baumrind's own work, much of the socialization literature in adolescence is outcome-oriented and, as a consequence, focuses on one outcome (e.g., self-esteem), or particular set of outcomes (e.g., indicators of achievement), at a time. However, the conclusions one reaches about the costs and benefits of particular parenting styles depend on the outcome studied. For example, one might hypothesize that authoritarian parenting has especially adverse effects in the realm of the psychosocial development because it restricts the child's sense of competence and independence; authoritarianism may not have negative effects in the realm of drug use, however, because parental control may act as a deterrent to deviance (Patterson & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1985). The reverse might be true for indulgently-raised children, who may enjoy benefits in the realm of psychosocial development but evidence higher rates of deviance. In the present investigation we have included a range

more heterogeneous and larger sample. The present study replicates Baumrind's recent work, but is distinct in two important ways. First, while Baumrind employed observational methods of family processes, our study is based on self-report measures of parenting practices. Second, whereas Baumrind's results are based on a small sample of predominantly white and middle-class families, the present research examines parenting and adolescent development in a sample of several thousand youngsters from varying ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

In the present study, the families of approximately 4,100 adolescents were classified into one of four groups (authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, or neglectful) on the basis of adolescents' ratings of their parents on two dimensions: acceptance/involvement and firm control. These groups of adolescents were compared on four sets of outcomes: psychosocial development, school achievement, internalized distress, and problem behavior. The following hypotheses were tested: (1) Across all four sets of outcomes, adolescents from authoritative families were expected to score most positively, whereas adolescents from neglectful families were expected to score most negatively; (2) adolescents from authoritarian families were expected to score more positively than those from indulgent families in the domains of academic competence and problem behavior; and (3) adolescents from indulgent families were expected to score more positively than those from authoritarian families in the domains of psychosocial development and

of outcome variables that tap several aspects of adolescent functioning in order to evaluate more thoroughly the impact of various parenting styles on adolescent development and behavior.

The groups of adolescents contrasted in this study are similar to four of the groups described by Baumrind (in press) in a recent report on 124 families from her ongoing Family Socialization and Developmental Competence Project. Parenting styles and adolescent competence and adjustment were rated on the basis on basis of naturalistic and laboratory-based observations, psychological tests, and structured interviews (see Baumrind, 1989). Of particular interest to the present study are the adolescents from four types of families in Baumrind's sample: authoritative, directive (comparable to authoritarian), democratic (comparable to indulgent), and unengaged (comparable to neglectful). Authoritatively-reared adolescents were the most competent and prosocial, lowest in internalizing problems, and among the lowest in drug use; adolescents raised in unengaged families were least competent and prosocial, and most prone to internalizing and externalizing problem behavior. Adolescents from democratic homes appeared as competent, prosocial, and autonomous as those from authoritative homes, but more likely to use drugs. In contrast, the adolescents from directive families displayed few behavioral problems (such as drug use) but were rated as less competent and prosocial than adolescents from democratic or authoritative homes.

We believe that Baumrind's findings warrant replication in a

internalized distress.

Method

Sample

The data for the present analyses come from two self-report questionnaires administered to approximately 10,000 ninth- through twelfth-grade students attending nine high schools in Wisconsin and California. The schools were selected to produce a diverse sample in terms of ethnicity, family structure, socioeconomic status, and type of community (rural, suburban, and urban). In the sample, 9 percent of the students are African-American, 14 percent are Asian-American, 12 percent are Hispanic-American, and 60 percent are non-Hispanic white (the remainder belong to one of several other ethnic groups). All of the students in attendance on each day of testing were asked to complete the questionnaires, and completed questionnaires were obtained each time from approximately 80% of the sample.

Measures

Of interest in the present analyses are several demographic variables, two parenting indices that were used to construct the family types, and the four sets of outcome variables.

Demographic variables. Students provided information on their background and current family situation. All respondents indicated their sex, ethnic identification (African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic-American, non-Hispanic white, and other), family structure (two-natural parents, single-parent, stepfamily, other) and the amount of education completed by each

parent residing with them. Parental education was coded as a two-level variable (less than college completion or college completion and higher). Because scores on the outcomes and parenting practices studied may vary as a function of child sex, child ethnicity, parental education, and family structure, these variables were included in our examinations of the relation between parenting styles and adolescent outcomes.

Parenting style. The index of parenting style was developed to approximate the responsiveness and demandingness dimensions suggested by Baumrind (1971) and Maccoby and Martin (1983). The questionnaires contained many items on parenting practices that were taken or adapted from existing measures (e.g., Dornbusch et al., 1985; Patterson & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1985; Rodgers, 1966) or developed for the program of work. Adolescents completed these measures vis-a-vis both parents in two-parent households (in which ratings for mother and father were averaged) and vis-a-vis mothers in single-parent homes. (Baumrind [in press] reports that there is considerable convergence between mothers' and fathers' ratings.) Based on the previous work of Steinberg et al. (1989), a number of items were selected to correspond with several dimensions of parenting identified in earlier studies, and these items were subjected to exploratory factor analyses using an oblique rotation (we had no reason to assume that the dimensions are orthogonal). As in other studies of parenting practices (see Schafer, 1965; Steinberg, 1990), three factors emerged: acceptance/involvement, firm control, and psychological

autonomy.[1]

Scores on the acceptance/involvement and firm control dimensions were used in the present investigation to assign families to one of four groups, as outlined below. The acceptance/involvement scale measures the extent to which the adolescent perceives his or parents as loving, responsive, and involved (sample items: "I can count on [them] to help me out if I have some kind of problem"; ""When he wants me to do something, he explains why"; 10 items, alpha=.72). The firm control factor assesses parental monitoring and supervision of the adolescent (sample items: "How much do your parents try to know where you go at night?"; "My parents know exactly where I am most afternoons after school"; 9 items, alpha=.76). In this sample, the dimensions are modestly intercorrelated: ($r=.34$, $p<.001$). For each of these scales, several of the items are in a true/false format, while others are Likert-scaled on a three-point scale; in the formation of the composite indeces for acceptance and firm control, items were weighted to adjust for differences in scaling.

Four parenting categories were defined by trichotomizing the sample on each dimension and examining the two variables simultaneously. Following Maccoby and Martin (1983), authoritative families (N=1320) were those who scored in the upper tertiles on both acceptance/involvement and firm control, whereas neglectful families (N=1521) were in the lowest tertiles on both variables. Authoritarian families (N=627) were in the

lowest tertile on involvement, but in the highest tertile on control. Indulgent families (N=613) were in the highest tertile on involvement but in the lowest tertile on control. Nearly 4,100 families fell into one of these four groups. Families who scored in the middle tertile on either of the dimensions were excluded from the analysis, in order to ensure that the four groups of families represented distinct categories.[2] Table 1 indicates that the sample of families scoring in the upper or lower tertiles on the parenting variables is demographically comparable to the overall project sample. Table 2 provides information on the sizes of each of the four parenting groups as well as each group's mean and standard deviations on the involvement and control scales.

Tables 1 and 2 About Here

Outcome variables. Four sets of outcome variables were examined: psychosocial development, academic competence, internalized stress, and problem behavior.

The three indices of psychosocial development include the social competence subscale of the Adolescent Self-Perception Profile (Harter, 1982) and two subscales from Greenberger's Psychosocial Maturity Inventory, work orientation and self-reliance (Form D; Greenberger, et al., 1974). The social competence measure (alpha=.78) includes five items that ask students whether they perceive themselves as popular, as having

many friends, and as making friends easily. The participants are asked to read two alternatives (e.g., "Some teenagers feel that they are socially accepted, but other teenagers wish that more people their age would accept them") and choose the one that is more like themselves. The work orientation (alpha=.73) and self-reliance (alpha=.81) subscales are each composed of 10 items. The work orientation scale measures the adolescent's pride in the successful completion of tasks. A sample item, reverse coded, is "I find it hard to stick to anything that takes a long time". The self-reliance scale measures the adolescent's feelings of internal control and ability to make decisions without extreme reliance on others. A sample item, reverse coded, is "Luck decides most things that happen to me".

The three measures of school achievement include overall grade-point-average, the academic competence subscale of the Adolescent Self-Perception Profile (Harter, 1982), and a scale developed for this project that assesses the adolescent's orientation toward school. Respondents provided information on their current high school grades, on a nine-point scale ranging from "mostly As" to "mostly below Ds". Dornbusch et al. (1987) have reported a correlation of .75 between self-reported grades and actual grades taken from official school records, with a tendency for some inflation in self-reported grades among students who have less than a C average. The academic competence subscale (alpha=.73) includes 5 items asking about the student's perceptions of his or her intelligence in relation to classmates,

ability to complete homework quickly, and capability in classwork. The measure of orientation toward school was derived from a set of items that assesses the student's feeling of attachment to school (Wehlage, et al., 1989). Orientation toward school is a 6-item scale (alpha=.69) that emerged from a factor analysis of the total set of items. A sample item is "I feel satisfied with school because I'm learning a lot".

The set of three measures tapping problem behavior includes reports of involvement in drug and alcohol use, school misconduct, and delinquency. The measure of drug and alcohol use taps the frequency of involvement with cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs (alpha=.86) (Greenberger, Steinberg & Vaux, 1981). The measure of school misconduct assesses the frequency of such behaviors as cheating, copying homework, and tardiness (alpha=.68) (Ruggiero, 1984). The measure of delinquency assesses the frequency of such behaviors as carrying a weapon, theft, and getting into trouble with the police (alpha=.82) (Gold, 1980).

Two measures of internalized distress were derived from a 13-item version of the Depression Scale of the Center for Epidemiologic Studies (CES-D; Radloff, 1977). Results of a factor analyses suggested a somatic symptoms scale (alpha=.67), which includes items concerning the frequency of headaches, stomachaches, colds, and so forth; and a psychological symptoms scale (alpha=.88), which includes items concerning the frequency of anxiety, tension, and depression.

Plan of Analysis

A four-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted for each of the 4 clusters of related outcome variables, with parenting style (4 categories), sex, ethnicity (4 categories), and parental education (2 categories) as the independent variables. Our expectation was that the results would vary as a function of adolescent sex, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. To this end, we systematically examined the interactive effects of parenting style with each of these variables with each set of outcomes.

We were also interested in whether the results varied as a function of the adolescent's household composition (specifically, intact versus nonintact). Unfortunately, the strong correlation in our sample between household composition and ethnicity, and between household composition and parental education, precluded our assessing these effects separately in one overall model. Because we were less interested in the moderating effects of family structure than parental education or ethnicity, we chose to examine the moderating effects of this variable first, in a series of exploratory analyses. These analyses indicated, somewhat surprisingly, that the adolescent's family structure does not moderate the relations between parenting style and the various outcomes studied. The results we report therefore are based on analyses of the sample with adolescents from different family structures combined.[3]

Univariate tests were conducted within clusters that had

significant parenting style differences overall, and significant results on the univariate tests were followed up with a series of six planned simple comparisons between all possible pairs of the four parenting style groups. Given our primary interest in parenting style and its correlates, we do not focus on main effects of sex, ethnicity, or parental education. Rather, we limit our discussion to effects indicating a main effect for parenting style or an interaction between parenting style and any of the demographic variables.

Results

All of the MANOVAs, as well as the univariate tests associated with each cluster of variables, indicated a significant effect for parenting style (see Tables 3 through 6), enabling us to carry out the series of planned comparisons. Mean scores for each parenting style group on each of the measures are presented in Table 7, while the results of the planned comparisons are shown in Table 8.

Only one of the interactions between parenting style and ethnicity, parental education, or adolescent sex reached statistical significance: the two-way interaction between parenting style and parental education in the prediction of internalized distress (see table 5).[4] In light of the general absence of interactive effects, we focus our attention on the main effects of parenting style. The overall pattern of findings displayed in the tables suggests that the results are most sensibly organized in terms of adolescent profiles in each of the

family groups.

Tables 3 through 6 About Here

Adolescents from Authoritative Homes

As hypothesized, adolescents from authoritative families evidence the most positive levels of competence and adjustment across the different outcome variables. As Tables 5 and 6 indicate, this group reports significantly higher academic competence, significantly lower levels of problem behavior, and significantly higher levels of psychosocial development than adolescents from authoritarian, indulgent, or neglectful households. With respect to internalizing symptoms, however, the results indicate that whereas adolescents in authoritative homes report fewer psychological and somatic symptoms than those in neglectful homes, their reports do not differ significantly from adolescents in either authoritarian or indulgent homes.

There are a few exceptions to this overall pattern, however. With respect to grade-point average, drug use, and delinquency, adolescents in authoritative homes do not differ significantly from those in authoritarian homes. With respect to self-reliance, social competence, and delinquency, there is no difference between authoritatively-reared and indulgently-reared adolescents. In most of these cases, however, the direction of the group differences favors the authoritatively-reared adolescents, and in no instance, across the 11 outcome variables

studied, do authoritatively-reared youngsters score significantly worse than adolescents from any other group.

Adolescents from Neglectful Homes

Consistent with our predictions, students from the neglectful group report the poorest outcomes across all four sets of dependent measures. On every outcome, the neglectful group is significantly worse off than the authoritative group. Adolescents in neglectful homes, however, do not differ significantly from those in authoritarian homes on those outcome variables that are strongly tied to self-confidence (self-reliance, perceived social competence, and perceived academic competence). Finally, the neglectful group is not significantly different from the indulgent group on measures of behavior problems, engagement in school (grade-point-average and school orientation), self-reliance, or somatic symptoms.

Adolescents from Authoritarian or Indulgent Households

Adolescents raised in authoritarian or indulgent homes tend to score between the authoritative and neglectful groups on most outcome measures. However, as predicted, these two groups show patterns of strengths and weaknesses that vary as a function of the outcome variable examined. In general, when differences between these two groups obtain, they tend to favor youngsters from authoritarian households, who report less school misconduct, less drug use, fewer somatic symptoms, and a more positive orientation toward school than their indulgently-reared peers. Adolescents from indulgent homes, however, report greater social

competence than authoritarian-raised adolescents, and tend to score higher (albeit not significantly so) on other measures of self-perceptions (self-reliance and academic competence). Indeed, as noted above, on measures tapping positive self-perceptions, adolescents from authoritarian homes have no advantages over those from neglectful homes. In contrast, on measures tapping problem behavior, and to a lesser extent, school competence, adolescents from indulgent homes are no better off than those from neglectful homes.

Tables 7 and 8 About Here

Magnitude of Differences

In Table 8, we also present an estimate of the effect size for each of the planned contrasts, r, which is considered a more useful index of effect size than the amount of variance explained (see Rosenthal and Rubin, 1982). Table 8 shows that although many of the contrasts are statistically significant, the magnitude of the effect sizes is small. Nevertheless, examining the pattern of effect sizes is helpful in interpreting the findings. As expected, the largest effects are found in the contrasts between adolescents from authoritative and neglectful homes, whereas effect sizes associated with other contrasts are far more modest.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that there are modest,

but theoretically predictable, differences in adjustment and psychosocial functioning among adolescents raised in authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful homes. The general absence of interactions between parenting style and adolescent sex, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status suggests that the benefits of authoritative parenting, and the costs of neglectful parenting, transcend demographic groups, at least in the age range studied.

For the authoritative and neglectful groups, the findings are consistent across the four sets of outcomes. As in previous studies, most notably, those of Baumrind, adolescents raised in authoritative homes are better adjusted and more competent; they are confident about their abilities, competent in areas of achievement, and less likely than their peers to get into trouble. In sharp contrast, adolescents raised in neglectful homes are consistently compromised, whether the index examined taps competence, self-perceptions, misbehavior, or psychological distress.

As predicted -- and consistent with Baumrind's recent reports -- adolescents in the other two groups show a mixture of positive and negative traits. As one might expect, adolescents raised in authoritarian homes score reasonably well on measures of obedience and conformity to the standards of adults; they do well in school and they are less likely than their peers to be involved in deviant activities. At the same time, however, these youngsters appear to have paid a price where self-confidence is

concerned -- both in terms of self-reliance and in terms of their perceptions of their own social and academic abilities. The overall pattern suggests a group of young people who have been overpowered into obedience.

The adolescents from indulgent homes present an especially interesting picture. Like their counterparts from neglectful homes, these adolescents are relatively disengaged from school and show a higher frequency of involvement in certain deviant behaviors, including drug and alcohol use and school misconduct -- two aspects of deviance that are both peer-oriented and, in some circles of adolescents, "normative". However, the fact that adolescents from indulgent homes do not score higher than the authoritative or authoritarian groups on the measure of more serious delinquency and score among the highest in the sample on measures of social competence and self-confidence suggests a picture of psychologically adjusted youngsters who are especially oriented toward their peers, and toward the social activities valued by adolescents -- including some activities not especially valued by adults. Interestingly, these youngsters report greater somatic distress than their peers from authoritarian homes, which may be related to their more frequent drug and alcohol use.

Our assessment of multiple outcome variables in the analyses indicates that the adolescent correlates of parenting style vary according to the outcome examined and suggests several tentative conclusions about the specific contributions of parental acceptance and firm control to the child's development. In

particular, the relatively higher self-confidence among youngsters from both authoritative and indulgent households suggests that parental acceptance may be the primary contributor to the development of positive self-conceptions and psychological well-being. The relatively lower levels of problem behavior among adolescents raised in authoritative and in authoritarian homes suggests that firm control may help deter the development of behavioral problems. That adolescents from authoritative homes score higher than all other youngsters on indicators of academic competence suggests either that parental acceptance and firm control together have a positive effect on achievement-related phenomena (either interactively or additively) or, alternatively, that some other parenting dimension that distinguishes authoritative homes from other households is linked specifically to outcomes in this domain.

Two important limitations of this study warrant specific comment and consideration: the cross-sectional nature of the design and the use of self-report data to assess both independent and dependent variables. Because the data are cross-sectional, it is impossible to say with any certainty that the parenting practices examined have in fact caused or even preceded the outcomes assessed. It could well be the case, for example, that competent adolescents elicit authoritativeness from their parents, or that less well-adjusted youth provoke parental neglect (see Lewis, 1981). Although reverse causality can not be

ruled out, however, a number of specific findings argue against this explanation across the board. For example, the results indicate that both drug use and school misconduct are higher among indulgently-reared adolescents, and lower among those from authoritarian homes, which we interpreted as suggesting that parental control deters deviant behavior. While it is, of course, possible that deviant behavior might elicit indulgence from some parents, we think it more likely that parents would respond with increased, not diminished, control. Similarly, we find it hard to believe that parents are likely to respond to youngsters low in self-confidence and high in psychological distress with autocracy or neglect, and find the reverse account (i.e., that autocracy and neglect diminish youngsters' self-confidence and increase their distress) far more plausible.

The second issue is more difficult to resolve and more cumbersome to discuss. Because the data all derive from youngsters' reports, we can only say that youngsters who characterize their parents in certain ways show particular patterns of behavior and psychological functioning. This may indicate that youngsters' subjective experience of parental behavior is an important influence on their own development and well-being. It is important to know, for methodological as well as theoretical reasons, whether parents' <u>actual</u> behavior toward their children is associated in similar ways with the outcomes assessed. In recent years, to this end, we have seen tremendous growth in the "objective" assessment of parental behavior toward

adolescents, primarily through observational techniques (e.g., Cooper et al., 1983; Hauser et al, 1984).

Although we acknowledge the important contribution that this observational work has made to the study of adolescent development, we do not subscribe to the view that objective (i.e., independent) assessments of parenting behavior are the only valid indicators of what takes place in the family (see also Jessor & Jessor, 1977, for a similar argument). Indeed, one might very reasonably argue that if a child experiences his parents as unaccepting or uninvolved (regardless of how parents may characterize themselves, or how they may appear to outside observers), then this is what they in fact are, at least as far as the child's psychological development is concerned. Ultimately, one can only say that subjective and objective assessments of parental behavior each provide an important window on the child's experience in the family, and that no one approach to the study of socialization is inherently superior to the other.

The striking comparability of our results with Baumrind's (in press) findings, despite different methods and procedures, lends additional support to the contention that the self-report data used in this study have not resulted in unusual biases in the findings. Indeed, this replication suggests that researchers interested in studying relations between adolescent adjustment and parenting may be able, in some instances, to employ self-report measures of parenting practices. Among other advantages,

self-report measures enable investigators to include substantially larger samples in their research than is typically the case in observational study, and larger samples may permit the detection of theoretically important findings that may go unnoticed in smaller-scale research.

We also believe that the results argue against the possibility that the associations between the parenting practices and outcome variables found in this study are spurious, the result of common source and method variance. Although one might argue that adolescents who characterize themselves in more positive terms also describe their parents in more positive light, the specific pattern of findings observed cautions against this relatively simplistic account of things. Such arguments can not explain why we find the particular strengths and weaknesses associated with authoritarian and indulgent parenting that we do. Nonetheless, this and the other caveats we raise certainly call for more work that is longitudinal, and work that employs multiple methods and informants.

Although the magnitude of effects uncovered is admittedly small, the findings presented here are of particular interest conceptually, for they suggest that Maccoby and Martin's (1983) scheme is a workable empirical framework for those interested in the study of socialization during adolescence. Of special interest in this study were the planned comparisons involving the indulgent versus the neglectful groups, since they are often grouped together into one parenting style, "permissive". The

results support distinguishing between nondemanding families who are high versus low in responsiveness, especially if the outcome of interest involves some aspect of youngsters' feelings about themselves. Taken together, these results indicate a need for a broadening of parenting style research to include at least four categories of families, rather than the three that traditionally have been used.

Footnotes

1. The psychological autonomy dimension appears to be important in defining authoritativeness but less so in differentiating among authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. For this reason, we do not employ this variable in the present analyses.

2. We also conducted the analyses using median split procedures to determine parenting style groups. The results do not change.

3. The analyses of the effect of parenting style were repeated separately for three family structures: intact, mother only, and mother and stepfather (there were not enough students in other possible categories to permit separate analyses). In general, these analyses replicated the pattern of results for the total sample: adolescents from authoritative households scored most positively, adolescents from neglectful households scored most negatively, and adolescents from authoritarian or indulgent households fell between these two extremes (see also Baumrind, in press). The one exception to the general trends concerned the relation between parenting style and internalized distress: Although significant differences in the prevalence of internalized distress as a function of parenting style were evident among adolescents from intact homes, significant differences between parenting groups were not observed among adolescents with a single mother or a mother and stepfather.

4. Follow-up analyses indicated that the effect of parenting

style on psychological symptoms is significant in both parental education groups ($F(3.1103)=3.75$, $p<.05$ for the lower education group and $F(3,2614)=20.40$, $p<.001$ for the higher education group), the effect on somatic complaints is significant only among adolescents from college-educated households ($F(3,2614)=5.81$, $p<.001$). The pattern of differences with respect to psychological symptoms is similar for the two parental education groups, however.

References

Baumrind, D. (1967). Child care practices anteceding three patterns of preschool behavior. Genetic Psychology Monographs, 75, 43-88.

Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. Developmental Psychology Monograph, 4 (1), part 2.

Baumrind, D. (in press). Parenting styles and adolescent development. In J. Brooks-Gunn, R. Lerner, and A.C. Petersen (Eds.), The encyclopedia of adolescence. New York: Garland.

Baumrind, D. (1989). Rearing competent children. In W. Damon (Ed.), Child development today and tomorrow. (pp. 349-378). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cooper, C., Grotevant, H., & Condon, S. (1983). Individuality and connectedness in the family as a context for adolescent identity formation and role taking skill. In H. Grotevant and C. Cooper (Eds.), Adolescent development in the family. (pp. 43-60). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Dornbusch, S., Carlsmith, J., Bushwall, S., Ritter, P., Leiderman, P., Hastorf, A., & Gross, R. (1985). Single parents, extended households, and the control of adolescents. Child Development, 56, 326-341.

Dornbusch, S., Ritter, P., Liederman, P., Roberts, D., & Fraleigh, M. (1987). The relation of parenting style to adolescent school performance. Child Development, 58, 1244-1257.

Gold, M. (1970). Delinquent behavior in an American city. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Greenberger, E., Josselson, R., Knerr, C., and Knerr, B. (1974). The measurement and structure of psychosocial maturity. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 4, 127-143.

Greenberger, E., Steinberg, L., & Vaux, A. (1981). Adolescents who work: Health and behavioral consequences of job stress. Developmental Psychology, 17, 691-703.

Harter, S. (1982). The perceived competence scale for children. Child Development, 53, 87-97.

Hauser, S., Powers, S., Noam, G., Jacobson, A., Weiss, B., & Follansbee, D. (1984). Familial contexts of adolescent ego development. Child Development, 55, 195-213.

Jessor, R., and Jessor, S. (1977). Problem behavior and psychosocial development: A longitudinal study of youth. New York: Academic Press.

Maccoby, E., & Martin, J. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family: Parent-child interaction. In E.M. Hetherington (Ed.), Handbook of child psychology: Vol.4. Socialization, personality, and social development. (pp. 1-101). New York: Wiley.

Mounts, N., Lamborn, S., and Steinberg, L. (April, 1989). Relations between family process and school achievement in different ethnic contexts. Paper presented as a part of a symposium entitled "Ethnic Comparisons of Parent and Peer Influences on Adolescent Development," at the biennial

meetings of the Society for Research in Child Development, Kansas City.

Patterson, G., and Stouthamer-Loeber, M. (1984). The correlation of family management practices and delinquency. Child Development, 55, 1299-1307.

Radloff, L.S. (1977). The CES-D scale: A self-report depression scale for research in the general population. Applied Psychological Measurement, 1, 385-401.

Ruggiero, M. (1984). Work as an impetus to delinquency: An examination of theoretical and empirical connections. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Irvine.

Schaefer, E. (1965). Children's reports of parental behavior: An Inventory. Child Development, 36, 413-424.

Sears, R. R., Maccoby, E. E., & Levin, H. (1957). Patterns of child rearing. Evanston, Ill.: Row Peterson.

Steinberg, L. (1990). Interdependency in the family: Autonomy, conflict, and harmony. In S. Feldman and G. Elliot (Eds.), At the threshold: The developing adolescent. (pp. 255-276). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Steinberg, L., Elmen, J., & Mounts, N. (1989). Authoritative parenting, psychosocial maturity, and academic success among adolescents. Child Development, 60, 1424-1436.

Wehlage, G., Rutter, R., Smith, G., Lesko, N., and Fernandez, R. (1989). Reducing the risk: Schools as communities of support. London: Falmer Press.

Table 1

Comparison of Demographic Characteristics of Total Sample versus Study Sample

Ethnicity	Black	White	Asian	Hispanic
Total Sample	10.7	61.2	13.8	14.3
Study Sample	10.5	60.9	14.0	14.6

Sex	Male	Female
Total Sample	49.8	50.2
Study Sample	47.9	52.1

Parental Education	< College	College Graduate
Total Sample	29.3	70.7
Study Sample	29.7	70.3

Family Structure	Intact	Non-Intact
Total Sample	64.5	35.5
Study Sample	64.9	35.1

Table 2

Numbers of Cases in Parenting Style Groups, and Mean Scores and Standard Deviations on Measures of Parental Involvement and Firm Control

		Total	Authoritative	Authoritarian	Indulgent	Neglectful
Frequency		4081	1320	627	613	1521
Percent		100	32.3	15.4	15.0	37.3
Involvement	(mean)	.800	.936	.701	.926	.672
	(sd)	.140	.035	.068	.033	.081
Firm Control	(mean)	.725	.882	.884	.608	.571
	(sd)	.166	.045	.051	.073	.089

Table 3

Results of Multivariate and Univariate Analyses of Variance for Measures of Psychosocial Development

Effect	F	D.F.
Main Effects		
Parenting Style	12.44***	(3,3290)
Univariate effects		
Self-Reliance	6.71***	
Work Orientation	24.65***	
Social Competence	10.89***	
Sex	5.61***	
Univariate effects		
Self-Reliance	15.72***	
Work Orientation	2.81	
Social Competence	.11	
Parental Education	2.66	
Univariate effects		
Self-Reliance	6.72**	
Work Orientation	.96	
Social Competence	1.91	
Ethnicity	4.41***	
Univariate effects		
Self-Reliance	3.71*	
Work Orientation	.02	
Social Competence	8.99***	

Table 3 (continued)

Interactions	
Parenting Style by:	
Sex	.77
Parental Education	.94
Ethnicity	.90
Parenting Style by Sex by:	
Parental Education	1.33
Ethnicity	1.27
Parenting Style by Ethnicity by	
Parental Education	.90
Parenting Style by Ethnicity by	
Parental Education by	
Sex	.97

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Table 4

Results of Multivariate and Univariate Analyses of Variance for Measures of School Competence

Effect	F	D.F.
Main Effects		
Parenting Style	16.83***	(3,3260)
Univariate effects		
Grade-Point-Average	14.21***	
School Orientation	38.08***	
Academic Competence	13.58***	
Sex	5.73***	
Univariate effects		
Grade-Point-Average	12.70***	
School Orientation	.33	
Academic Competence	.06	
Parental Education	9.16***	
Univariate effects		
Grade-Point-Average	22.40***	
School Orientation	.62	
Academic Competence	9.87***	
Ethnicity	21.54***	
Univariate effects		
Grade-Point-Average	36.93***	
School Orientation	13.29***	
Academic Competence	7.41***	

Table 4 (continued)

Interactions	
Parenting Style by:	
Sex	1.43
Parental Education	1.15
Ethnicity	.76
Parenting Style by Sex by:	
Parental Education	.68
Ethnicity	.84
Parenting Style by Ethnicity by	
Parental Education	1.05
Parenting Style by Ethnicity by	
Parental Education by	
Sex	.86

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Table 5

Results of Multivariate and Univariate Analyses of Variance for Measures of Internalized Distress

Effect	F	D.F.
Main Effects		
Parenting Style	9.42***	(3,3260)
Univariate effects		
Psychological Symptoms	16.02***	
Somatic Symptoms	6.43***	
Sex	82.74***	
Univariate effects		
Psychological Symptoms	157.97***	
Somatic Symptoms	84.31***	
Parental Education	5.07**	
Univariate effects		
Psychological Symptoms	8.77**	
Somatic Symptoms	.41	
Ethnicity	8.04***	
Univariate effects		
Psychological Symptoms	13.30***	
Somatic Symptoms	9.07***	

Table 5 (continued)

Interactions	
Parenting Style by:	
Sex	1.21
Parental Education	2.49*
Ethnicity	1.11
Parenting Style by Sex by:	
Parental Education	.92
Ethnicity	.86
Parenting Style by Ethnicity by	
Parental Education	1.59
Parenting Style by Ethnicity by	
Parental Education by	
Sex	.99

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Table 6

Results of Multivariate and Univariate Analyses of Variance for Measures of Problem Behaviors

Effect	F	D.F.
Main Effects		
Parenting Style	11.89***	(3,3260)
Univariate effects		
School Misconduct	20.59***	
Drug Use	25.94***	
Delinquency	9.16***	
Sex	8.33***	
Univariate effects		
School Misconduct	.09	
Drug Use	.67	
Delinquency	21.75***	
Parental Education	2.48	
Univariate effects		
School Misconduct	7.03	
Drug Use	.27	
Delinquency	.55	
Ethnicity	13.20***	
Univariate effects		
School Misconduct	7.69***	
Drug Use	35.15***	
Delinquency	5.35**	

Table 6 (continued)

Interactions	
Parenting Style by:	
Sex	.81
Parental Education	.88
Ethnicity	1.28
Parenting Style by Sex by:	
Parental Education	.72
Ethnicity	.89
Parenting Style by Ethnicity by	
Parental Education	.64
Parenting Style by Ethnicity by	
Parental Education by	
Sex	.68

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations on Four Sets of Outcomes Among Adolescents from Authoritative, Authoritarian, Indulgent, and Neglectful Families

Outcome	Authoritative	Authoritarian	Indulgent	Neglectful
Psychosocial Development				
Self-Reliance	3.09 (.431)	2.96 (.466)	3.03 (.400)	2.98 (.437
Work Orientation	2.88 (.409)	2.80 (.427)	2.74 (.352)	2.67 (.397
Social Competence	3.06 (.533)	2.88 (.584)	3.11 (.529)	2.92 (.530
School Competence				
Grade-Point-Average	2.86 (.745)	2.76 (.805)	2.68 (.792)	2.57 (.825
School Orientation	2.97 (.476)	2.85 (.506)	2.75 (.391)	2.67 (.476
Academic Competence	2.92 (.545)	2.74 (.543)	2.81 (.511)	2.71 (.534
Internalized Distress				
Psychological Symptoms	2.36 (.740)	2.46 (.803)	2.43 (.750)	2.65 (.818
Somatic Symptoms	2.09 (.588)	2.04 (.599)	2.17 (.590)	2.21 (.644
Problem Behaviors				
School Misconduct	2.16 (.525)	2.26 (.602)	2.38 (.515)	2.43 (.604
Drug Use	1.41 (.485)	1.38 (.565)	1.69 (.634)	1.68 (.724
Delinquency	1.15 (.206)	1.17 (.339)	1.20 (.286)	1.24 (.380

Table 8

Significance (t) and Effect Sizes (r) of Paired Contrasts Between Authoritative, Authoritarian, Indulgent, and Neglectful Families Across Four Sets of Adolescent Outcomes

Outcome		Authoritative vs Neglectful	Authoritarian vs Neglectful	Indulgent vs Neglectful	Authoritative vs Authoritarian	Indulgent vs Authoritarian	Authoritative vs Indulgent
Psychosocial Development							
Self-Reliance	(t)	4.01***	-.65	1.23	3.64***	1.53	1.48
	(r)	.070	.011	.021	.063	.027	.026
Work Orientation	(t)	8.40***	4.23***	2.13**	2.47*	-1.25	3.52***
	(r)	.144	.073	.037	.043	.022	.061
Social Competence	(t)	4.07***	-.91	3.90***	3.92***	4.01***	-.99
	(r)	.071	.016	.068	.068	.069	.017
School Competence							
Grade-Point-Average	(t)	6.33***	3.42***	1.71	1.64	-1.03	2.35*
	(r)	.110	.060	.030	.029	.018	.044
School Orientation	(t)	10.41***	5.19***	1.90	3.10**	-2.15*	5.05***
	(r)	.179	.090	.033	.054	.037	.088
Academic Competence	(t)	6.20***	.55	2.02*	4.18***	1.33	2.17*
	(r)	.107	.010	.035	.073	.023	.038
Internalized Distress							
Psychological Symptoms	(t)	-6.51***	-3.55***	-3.54***	-1.66	.45	-.95
	(r)	.113	.062	.062	.029	.008	.017
Somatic Symptoms	(t)	-3.33***	-3.68***	-.67	.86	2.10*	-1.56
	(r)	.058	.064	.012	.015	.037	.027
Problem Behaviors							
School Misconduct	(t)	-7.54***	-3.97***	-.93	-2.05*	2.09*	-4.08***
	(r)	.130	.067	.016	.035	.036	.071
Drug Use	(t)	-7.06***	-6.40***	.26	.55	4.88***	-4.88***
	(r)	.122	.111	.005	.010	.085	.085
Delinquency	(t)	-4.90***	-3.25**	-1.57	-.72	1.01	-1.74
	(r)	.085	.057	.027	.013	.018	.030

*p(.05 **p(.01 ***p(.001